

# Half-Marathon      Protesting Inequality by Engaging in Inequality

Guys who want to compete in the Des Moines Women's Half Marathon will have to pay a 23 percent higher registration fee than women.

"As a male registering for this event, you recognize that your registration cost will be 23 percent higher to reflect current wage inequality between men and women in the state of Iowa," **read an explanation on the event website.**

Oh, I see. Race organizers are protesting inequality by engaging in inequality.

RipRoar Events, the Des Moines-based company behind next month's race, said the 23 percent surcharge for males will be donated to a "Des Moines-based women's empowerment initiative."

I was alerted to the gender-based pricing scheme by one of my Iowa readers.

"My wife was going to run the half until she saw this and refused to even sign up for it," he told me. "This doesn't do anything for women. They are just discriminating against someone else. It makes them no better."

And for a race that celebrates female empowerment, their website includes several head-scratching items.

Take for example this item—culled from the "FAQ" section:

"Q. Will there be restrooms on the course? A. There will be a restroom located at each aid station. After all, it is a women's race."

And check out this line from the team relay section: “The toughest part of the team relay is determining who gets cut: Carrie, Samantha, Charlotte or Miranda?”

Race organizers also encouraged participants to use the hashtag “I AM MORE.” They said it was a way to connect to “a greater community of empowering, inspiring and label-defying women in our community.”

And what better way to defy labels than by labeling the female runners as a bunch of wine-swilling *Sex and the City* fans who can’t control their bladders?

I wonder if the surcharge will apply to transgender runners or gender fluid runners or non-binary runners?

Come to think of it, what would organizers do if a man who identifies as a woman wins the women’s half-marathon—or heaven forbid—a man who identifies as a man?

Maybe the race organizers should implement some safeguards—like making the men start the race 23 minutes after the women.

Or better yet—they could just require the men to run 23 steps behind the ladies.

I’m sure that’ll put the men in their place. {eo}